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THE CRAMER OF CONVERSATION

Approved: CAG 7/13

Date: June 18, 1959

Time: 3:30 p.m.

Place: French Villa
(Les Cramers)

Participants:

United States

The Secretary
Mr. Merchant
Ambassador Thompson
Mr. Freers

France

M. Couve de Murville
M. Lucet
M. Laloy
M. Soutou

United Kingdom

Mr. Selwyn Lloyd
Sir Anthony Rumbold
Sir Frank Roberts
Mr. Hancock
Mr. Laskey

Federal Republic

Dr. Von Brentano
Ambassador Grew
Mr. Kuesterer

Subject: Problems Relating to the Conference

Copies to: Geneva: USDel (Limited)
Washington: Mr. Dillon
Mr. Murphy
Mr. Canning
Mr. Kohler
Mr. Allen Dulles
Defense: Secretary McElroy

Embassy: London, Paris
Down (eyes only Ambassador)
Moscow (eyes only Charge)
USBER Berlin (eyes only Gufier)
Paris USRO (eyes only Burgess)

Mr. Berter opened the meeting by saying that he had not heard a word from Gromyko over the weekend. US reaction to the Soviet proposals had been unfavorable and even indignant. It now seemed impossible to go back to the discussions before the presentation of the latest Soviet plan.

Couve mentioned that the French had had a Cabinet meeting on Saturday and had agreed the Gromyko plan was unacceptable. He also saw difficulty in going back to the discussions since there did not seem to be much to talk about. The best thing now would be to break off for a recess. However, it might put us in an unfavorable position to take the initiative on this and we should try to put the burden on the Soviets.)

Lloyd said the British agreed that the Soviet plan was not a basis for discussion. The question was how to deal with the present situation. There should be one more effort to get some agreement at the conference on Berlin. In any event, there were two things that had to be worked out. One was to formulate our proposals on Berlin in a new document which would have public appeal and represent our actual negotiating position. The Berlin proposals in the Western Peace Plan had admittedly been an opening tactical position. The second thing was to decide on our position concerning a summit meeting. The British were concerned that Khrushchev might take the initiative himself and invite heads of government to such a meeting on the grounds that the Foreign Ministers could do nothing. The British position on this would be to give an affirmative answer. They did not want a rift with their Allies but they were not prepared to lead their people into a dangerous situation without one last effort toward settlement. Under these circumstances, they would prefer the initiative for a summit meeting to come from the Western Powers. They did not agree with the appraisal that Khrushchev no longer wanted a summit meeting.

Mr. Herter said any discussion of the summit here would revolve around time, place, and agenda. President Eisenhower had made the U.S. position on a summit meeting clear and there had been nothing here to justify holding one. He would not go to a Summit unless the threat of pressure on Berlin were removed. If the Foreign Ministers could not work out anything in all this time here, how could the heads of government succeed?

Lloyd said the problem of a summit meeting would be discussed here whether or not we all wanted such discussion. If the question is raised by the Soviets, we should ask for 48 hours recess to make our replies.

Mr. Herter pointed out that Gromyko had said he wouldn't bargain about a summit meeting. Perhaps he would not talk about it.

Couvo thought it might ease the situation if the Western Powers took the initiative on a recess. We could then ask the Soviets what basis they thought there was for a summit meeting.

Lloyd remarked that if no summit were agreed on, there would be no pressures on the Russians but there would be every sort of world pressure on us. The Russians would seem to be cooperative while we were negative.

Mr. Herter said Khrushchev had created the present crisis. We had gone some distance in an effort to reduce tension. Khrushchev wanted to get rid of the tension by demanding further things from us. Public opinion had not been fooled and Khrushchev had miscalculated.

Lloyd said he believed that the two sides had substantially narrowed their differences here at the conference. He believed that we had the makings of an agreement. The Soviets apparently would not object to our own reassertion of our rights, even though they did not subscribe to them nor accept them. The question was whether they would be expressed or not in any agreement. There was agreement between the two sides, more or less, on troops, atomic weapons, espionage and propaganda activities in Berlin, a declaration by the GDR, and a commission procedure for dealing with the GDR. The heads of government could come to agreement along the lines laid out here. Khrushchev could not go away from a summit meeting without some agreement.

The Secretary said he doubted we were near agreement. Gromyko had said that we had only changed a few words and came in our position.

Lloyd reported he thought we had the makings of a bargain. There was agreement on the need for a temporary arrangement on Berlin to last until reunification. The Summit could start where we left off.

(Couve's remarks at this point were not audible to the reporter.)

Lloyd said when President Eisenhower had indicated he would not go to a summit meeting without a Berlin settlement, this constituted some pressure.

When Khrushchev sees within what limits we will make agreement and until he is confronted by our position, he won't believe that we cannot be squeezed. (This remark by Lloyd is as recorded by the reporting officer.)

(Couve's remarks at this point were also inaudible to the reporter.)

Mr. Herter said we seem to be back at the beginning.

Mr. Herter said a new formulation would be a question of drafting. We might be willing to discuss with Gromyko our formulation but the time limit and changes as proposed are completely unacceptable.

Couve wondered what we would talk about if Gromyko did in fact agree to go back to the earlier two papers.

Lloyd thought we could not just simply ask the Soviets to forget their new proposals, we would have to make a positive offer.

Mr. Herter remarked that Gromyko had made the point in his private talk with Mr. Herter last week that we could not expect him to change his proposals, although he did endeavor to minimize the threat associated with them.

Couve suggested that the Western Powers might propose a recess under the circumstances.

Lloyd thought that we should recess for 48 hours to develop our final presentation to be made at a Plenary Session on Wednesday. If the Soviet reactions then were negative, there would be no point in going on. The other Ministers agreed.

Von Brentano suggested that the new presentation of our Berlin proposals be accompanied by a statement expressing our regret that the Soviet Union had not been prepared to contribute toward the success of the conference nor had been willing to make any concessions. We should say that, consequently, the Western Foreign Ministers had thought it better to recess the meeting. Von Brentano then suggested that the question of a summit meeting be referred to a resumed Foreign Ministers Meeting following the recess. He thought it would be extremely dangerous to move on to a summit meeting from the present position which could be construed as being based on the latest Russian proposals. The Russians would be able to develop their proposals in world public opinion and generate pressures from all sides. If we reacted to pressure to go to a summit meeting, this would tempt the Russians to increase pressures.

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upon us at the summit meeting itself. There would always be pressure from the world press and public opinion for the meeting and for some agreement regardless of what it might be. The recess could be used to see how it would be possible to come to a summit meeting.

The Ministers then talked about tactics for the meeting with the Russians later in the afternoon.

It was agreed Mr. Herter would open the discussion on the basis of the second half of Lloyd's speech at the Plenary Session, calling for a return to the type of discussions going on before the latest Soviet proposals.

Von Brentano commented that we should not expect any new proposals from Gromyko. At dinner Friday night Gromyko had been quite tough and a hot discussion had ensued, during which, Von Brentano said, he had traded blow for blow with Gromyko. He and his colleagues at the dinner all agreed that the Soviets were in a rigid posture and were not prepared to make any concessions.

Mr. Herter stated that if the outcome of this afternoon's meeting were completely negative, President Eisenhower might want to make a direct communication to Khrushchev. This would represent a special effort which went along with the general British viewpoint. This was merely under consideration and the other Ministers would be informed if it were decided to make this move.

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